Environmental pressure on ecosystem

1829. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ecosystems such as riversheds, mangroves, coastal zones, forests and grasslands are overburdened by environmental pressures from commercialisation excessive resources use and indiscriminate dumping of industrial and agricultural waste;

(b) if so, what Government has done to ease the situation;

(c) whether Government is considering to impose environmental cess on the polluting industries; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Any developmental activity would affect the environment and ecosystem. In order to mitigate the same, the Government has enacted acts such as Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 and issued notifications under these to regulate activities in ecologically fragile areas such as Coastal Zones, Management of Hazardous Substances, established a procedure for according environment and forest clearance which *inter alia* provides for examination of use of resources such as land, water and energy, constituted authority to regulate ground water use.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The present Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 provides adequate powers to the competent authorities to prevent and control the pollution and mitigate the same and if necessary take punitive actions. In addition Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1979, provides for collection of 'water cess' for water abstracted.

Impact of global warming

1830. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that global warming is causing quick melting of ice to deplete natural resources and drying up of underground water;

(b) if so, the details thereof and its impact on the conditions; and

(c) the steps which are proposed to be taken to reserve the process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) According to the information furnished by the Ministry of Water Resources, some of the studies project that the Climate Change will effect the water resources of the various rivers of the country mostly because of increase in the glacier melt. As per the studies conducted by the Geological Survey of India if the present scenario of the receding glaciers is accelerated, there may be some reduction in the river discharge. It has been further indicated that the major part of the river discharge is contributed by snowfall and precipitation, which is likely to go up with global warming. The continuous retreat of glaciers may lead to marginal shortage of water in the Himalayan rivers. Studies also indicate that the major part of the glacier melt run off is released during June-September

period, which is a time for monsoon activity. Thus, marginal decrease in glacier contribution may be compensated by increased monsoon activity. Realising the need for proper assessment of the effect of Climate Change on water resources, research on these issues has been undertaken by institutes of national repute, like IIT Delhi, National Institute of Hydrology, etc.

The Ministry of Water Resources has constituted a Standing Committee for "Assessment of Impact of Climate Change on Water Resources". Government of India has also set up an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Principal Scientific Adviser on impacts of Climate Change to identify the impacts of anthropogenic Climate Change on India and to identify the measures that we may have to take in the future in relation to addressing vulnerability to anthropogenic Climate Change impacts. The composition of the Expert Committee includes eminent scientists and representative of various Ministries and Departments concerned. Prime Minister's 'Council on Climate Change' coordinates national action for assessment, adaptation and mitigation of Climate Change.

Polluting power firms

1831. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has noticed a report that NTPC was ranked as the third most polluting power firms in the world;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if so, whether Government would consider any measure to reduce the carbon emission in PSUs such as the NTPC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) According to a report compiled by Carbon Monitoring for Action (CARMA), a US based database, produced and financed by Confronting Climate Change Initiatives at the Center for Global Development, a think tank located in Washington DC, the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) is ranked as the third most polluting power firm in the world in terms of total quantity of carbon dioxide emitted per year. However, this database has not been validated or authenticated by the power companies and CARMA has sought comments/correction on the same. Further, in terms of the carbon intensity as such, *i.e.* the quantity of carbon dioxide emitted per unit of electricity produced, the NTPC ranks 2480 in the CARMA database. Realizing the rapid growth in the power sector, the Government is undertaking the following activities through NTPC for reduction of carbon dioxide emissions:

- Adopting super critical technology in its upcoming power projects.
- Diversifying into hydro sector power projects and renewable energy sources.
- Undertaking Renovation and Modernization (R&M) of old power plants for improving efficiency.
- Participating in the Clean Development Mechanism of Kyoto Protocol.
- Massive afforestation for carbon sink.